

Georgia MMPT project team working to refine alternatives

Terminal design details evolve as stakeholder coordination continues

Since the public meetings held in spring and summer of 2012, the developer and environmental team for the Georgia MultiModal Passenger Terminal (MMPT) project have been working together to further develop the project alternatives.

The project team's activities include:

- Meeting with residential and business interests, and neighborhood groups;
- Collecting data;
- Performing environmental analyses, and operational and traffic analyses; and
- Developing the overall master plan for the Georgia MMPT project area.

The project team has refined the design details of the Georgia MMPT's function and location based on discussions during its continued coordination with transportation and transit operators, and representatives from government, commercial and entertainment destinations around the study area.

In addition, the project team is evaluating a new street grid within the study area. This grid includes new streets added to provide connections within and through the area, and to support commercial, residential and recreational development.

Most recently, the team completed an Evaluation of Alternatives report to document the ability of each alternative to meet the project's goals and objectives.

For more information see Pages 2 and 3.



Georgia MMPT in the community

Reaching out locally, statewide and even nationally is crucial to the development and success of the Georgia MMPT project. Since summer 2012, the project team has been out and about, talking about the project and gathering feedback.

Around Atlanta, the team shared exhibits and other materials at the Neighborhood Summit at the Atlanta Regional Commission (ARC) building; the Collard Greens Festival in the English Avenue neighborhood; and the Oakland City Festival. Project team members conducted focus group discussions with study area property owners; business owners; government institutions; higher education institutions; public space and art groups; historic preservation groups; alternative transportation groups; faith-based groups; sustainability groups, and economic development organizations.

The project team has given project presentations to the Atlanta Planning Advisory Board, Georgia Planning Association, the Georgia Municipal Association, neighborhood planning units, and neighborhood groups. The team visited officials in Macon, Columbus, Griffin, Augusta, Valdosta and Savannah to present information about the project.

Nationally, the project team visited San Francisco, Salt Lake City and Denver to tour and research multimodal projects that are completed or being constructed. These projects included the Transbay Transit Center, Salt Lake Intermodal Hub, City Creek Center and Denver Union Station. During the trip, the team met with project managers and stakeholders to hear about the successes, challenges and lessons learned during their project processes.



Alternative C leading as preferred terminal alternative for Georgia MMPT project

Above-grade terminal would occupy Parcels 1 and 2, consist of two structures connected by their upper floors

In preparation of an Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS), the Georgia MMPT project team completed an Evaluation of Alternatives report to document the ability of each of the three terminal alternatives being studied to meet the project's goals and objectives.

The report included a matrix in which the three draft terminal design concepts Alternatives A, B and C, which were presented at the July 2012 public meeting, were compared side by side. Each alternative was "scored" on its negative or positive impacts on such criteria as improving connectivity; providing a transportation destination; and supporting new or renewed investment. Negative and positive impacts to environmental considerations – such as social conditions, historic resources and air quality – also were scored.

The evaluation revealed that Alternative C is leading as the preferred alternative to analyze further in the DEIS. When compared with the other alternatives, Alternative C best meets the Georgia MMPT project's goals and objectives. While it has largely the same environmental benefits and potential impacts as Alternatives A and B, it has the added value of potentially incorporating a major historic resource – the Atlanta Constitution Building – into the terminal design. Alternative C would also provide more opportunities for retail development within the Georgia MMPT while allowing development to be constructed over the terminal building and on adjacent parcels. Alternative C also would:

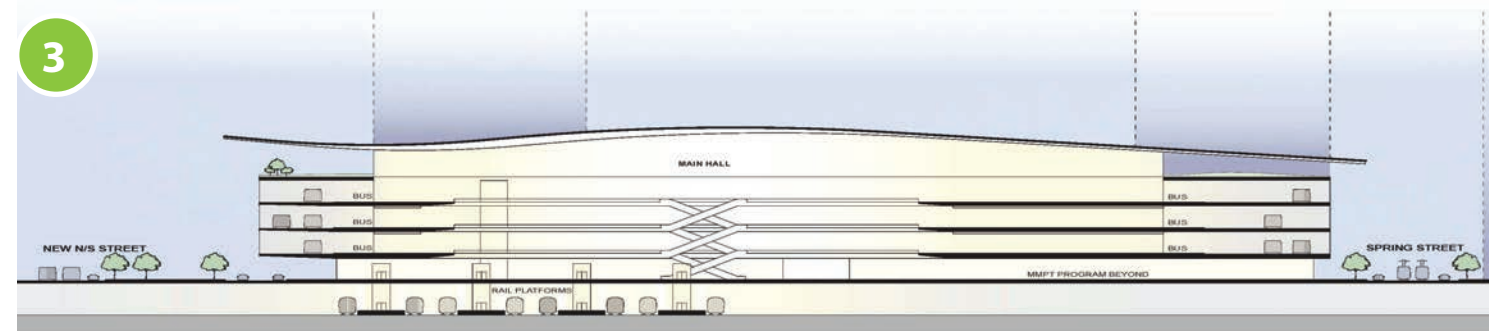
- Make possible a weather-protected direct connection to the Five Points MARTA Station upon its opening;
- Provide improved wayfinding and transfers for bus customers as compared to Alternatives A and B; and
- Establish the important east-west connection through the Gulch between the Five Points MARTA Station and CNN Center/Philips Arena.

As the project progresses, the project team will continue to refine the design and operational details of Alternative C with additional technical and public input.

To view the complete results of the evaluation, please visit the project website www.dot.ga.gov/mmpt and click on the Evaluation of Alternatives document.

The guidelines of the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) require that all projects requesting federal funding must be looked at carefully for all potential benefits and impacts. Given the Georgia MMPT's scope and study area characteristics, the project is being studied at the highest level of scrutiny: the Environmental Impact Statement (EIS). In the EIS, the proposed alternatives will be compared to a no-build or "do-nothing" alternative, and assessed for their respective effects on freight operations, environmental justice, traffic and parking, transportation, history, archaeology, construction impacts, hazardous materials, and noise impacts, among others. The EIS will take a deeper look at the benefits and impacts and investigate ways to mitigate the negative effects.

TERMINAL ALTERNATIVE C at a GLANCE



1 Perspective rendering, Alternative C, looking northeast.

2 Alternative C site overview; proposed roadway alignment.

3 East-west typical section view of Alternative C.

Street grid alternatives also being refined

The Evaluation of Alternatives also looked at two new potential street grid alternatives. Both are recommended for further study in the DEIS to determine the preferred option. The two street grid alternatives being considered have the same design north of Martin Luther King Jr. Drive, while one considers a new street constructed south of MLK, Jr. Dr. Both could be used with any of the terminal design alternatives. The Full or Partial New North-South Street alternatives would affect whether a new street is constructed south of Martin Luther King Jr. Drive. To view the street grid alternatives, go online to www.dot.ga.gov/mmpt and click on the Evaluation of Alternatives document.

WHAT is the GEORGIA MMPT PROJECT?

- A **hub** for existing and proposed multimodal transit networks, from local and regional buses to intercity buses, Amtrak, light rail and high-speed rail
- A driver of future **economic growth**, fueling jobs
- A catalyst for a **mixed-use destination** in the heart of downtown Atlanta
- A collaborative **public-private partnership** effort
- An **investment** in Georgia's long-term transportation needs
- An **opportunity to reconnect** city neighborhoods



View of the Gulch from Forsyth Street Bridge facing west.

Next steps for project include master plan completion, more public meetings

In the coming months, the Georgia MMPT project team will continue to refine the preferred terminal alternative, collect data and perform analyses for the Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS). Staff will also complete the master plan for the area and begin work on defining an implementation plan.

The project team will continue its outreach efforts, meeting with stakeholders and neighborhood groups. This spring, Georgia MMPT project information will be displayed at area festival kiosks. Another series of public meetings will be held this summer at which the team will present more

detailed station design graphics and information about operations and location.

The environmental studies and implementation plan are expected to be completed by the end of 2013. The Federal Transit Administration (FTA) is expected to issue its approval of the project through a Record of Decision (ROD) in the first quarter of 2014. Depending on the availability of funding, construction on the Georgia MMPT could begin as early as 2015.

As always, the project team welcomes public input. Contact us via phone, email, web or the social network sites.



HOW CAN I PARTICIPATE *in the* GEORGIA MMPT PROJECT?



WEB:

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CALL:

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EMAIL:

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FACEBOOK:

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There are ongoing opportunities to learn about the Georgia MMPT project and participate in the discussions that help guide the project's development.

Virtual public meetings and presentations – including basic project information, meeting minutes, summaries, fact sheets and other documents – can always be accessed on the project website, and regular updates are shared via the project's social media feeds.

Representatives from GDOT and other project staff will meet with various groups and organizations throughout the project, and interested individuals will have the opportunity to learn more and share input during public meetings that will be scheduled this summer.